

*Gannett News Service*

A recently completed anti-flooding project at the Croton-Harmon train station that cost village taxpayers \$3.5 million will receive \$700,000 in federal funding.

U.S. Rep. John Hall, D-Dover Plains, announced the funding this week. Good mass-transit service benefits the Hudson Valley in many ways, Hall said, and the demand for service was expanding up and down the line.

"We're working with every community to fill the need," he said.

About 5,000 people on the Hudson Line use Metro-North Railroad daily. That includes the Poughkeepsie, New Hamburg and Beacon stations.

The anti-flooding project, which began in May and concluded in December, added several feet of fill to a parking lot that had a tendency to flood during heavy rain, in some cases damaging cars.

Previous attempts to gain federal funding for the construction were unsuccessful.

Croton-on-Hudson Mayor Leo Wiegman said the village was "fortunate" that federal representatives finally were able to come through with funding to help defray the cost.

Besides the anti-flooding work, the village started an electronic payment system at the station and commissioned a report from a consultant on long-term plans for parking at the station.

"We want it to remain the first-class rail hub that it is," the mayor said. Croton-on-Hudson owns the parking lot, which accommodates about 2,000 cars.

The \$700,000 federal grant will be used to pay back ahead of schedule the borrowed money that financed the construction project, village officials said, so it won't directly affect the tax rate for residents in the village.

People who use the station regularly said they welcomed the steps to eliminate the flooding, which caused headaches and worse for local commuters.

"With the flooding, you could lose your car if you parked in the wrong place. It's definitely a good thing, money well spent," said Rob Figa of Ossining, who works in advertising.

"It's definitely a good thing. It will make it easier to commute, and it's good to help the local taxpayers," said Joan Doherty of Cortlandt, who regularly picks up family members at the station.

<http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/article/20100109/NEWS01/1090331/Feds-help-fund-flooding-control-at-rail-station>